



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Virginia Employment Commission

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Virginia's Unemployment Rate Fell to 3.0 percent in March; Total Nonfarm Payroll Employment Increased by 2,700

RICHMOND— Virginia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased by 0.2 percentage points to 3.0 percent in March. This is 1.5 percentage points below the rate from a year ago. According to household survey data in March, the labor force increased by 19,532 to 4,311,629, as the number of unemployed residents decreased by 4,922 to 131,101. The number of employed residents rose by 24,454 to 4,180,528. Virginia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate continues to be below the national rate, which fell 0.2 percentage points to 3.6 percent. The Commonwealth's labor force participation rate increased slightly by 0.3 percentage points to 63.3 percent in March. The labor force participation rate measures the proportion of the civilian population age 16 and older that is employed or actively looking for work.

Virginia nonagricultural wage and salary employment, from the monthly establishment survey, rose by 2,700 jobs in March to 4,020,900. February's preliminary estimate was revised upward by 3,300, adding to that month's job gain. In March, private sector employment increased by 3,400 jobs to 3,305,900 while public sector payrolls decreased by 700 jobs to 715,000. Over-the-month job losses occurred in both local government (-600 jobs) and state government (-400 jobs) while federal government employment increased by 300 jobs.

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Employment rose in seven of eleven major industry sectors and declined in four. The largest job gain during March occurred in **education and health services** with an increase of 3,000 jobs to 543,800. The second largest increase occurred in **professional and business services** (+1,600 jobs) to 790,200. Other industries with over-the-month job gains were **information** (+1,000 jobs) to 67,600; **construction** (+300 jobs) to 207,200; **leisure and hospitality services** (+300 jobs) to 393,400; **miscellaneous services** (+300 jobs) to 188,100; and **mining** (+200 jobs) to 7,200. The largest job loss during March occurred in **trade and transportation** (-3,000 jobs) to 665,700. The second largest job loss was in **government** (-700 jobs) to 715,000. Other losses occurred in **manufacturing** (-200 jobs) to 235,800 and **finance** (-100 jobs) to 206,900.

Nonfarm Employment in Virginia* Seasonally Adjusted

Industry	Employment			February 2022 to March 2022		March 2021 to March 2022	
	March 2022	February 2022	March 2021	Change	% Change	Change	% Change
Total Nonfarm	4,020,900	4,018,200	3,911,700	2,700	0.1%	109,200	2.8%
Total Private Sector	3,305,900	3,302,500	3,207,000	3,400	0.1%	98,900	3.1%
Goods-Producing	450,200	449,900	450,800	300	0.1%	-600	-0.1%
Mining	7,200	7,000	6,900	200	2.9%	300	4.3%
Construction	207,200	206,900	205,300	300	0.1%	1,900	0.9%
Manufacturing	235,800	236,000	238,600	-200	-0.1%	-2,800	-1.2%
Service-Providing	3,570,700	3,568,300	3,460,900	2,400	0.1%	109,800	3.2%
Private Service-Providing	2,855,700	2,852,600	2,756,200	3,100	0.1%	99,500	3.6%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	665,700	668,700	652,700	-3,000	-0.4%	13,000	2.0%
Information	67,600	66,600	65,500	1,000	1.5%	2,100	3.2%
Finance	206,900	207,000	210,500	-100	0.0%	-3,600	-1.7%
Professional and Business Services	790,200	788,600	773,300	1,600	0.2%	16,900	2.2%
Education and Health Services	543,800	540,800	533,900	3,000	0.6%	9,900	1.9%
Leisure and Hospitality Services	393,400	393,100	338,700	300	0.1%	54,700	16.1%
Miscellaneous Services	188,100	187,800	181,600	300	0.2%	6,500	3.6%
Government	715,000	715,700	704,700	-700	-0.1%	10,300	1.5%
Federal Government	185,800	185,500	186,800	300	0.2%	-1,000	-0.5%
State Government	155,000	155,400	154,500	-400	-0.3%	500	0.3%
Local Government	374,200	374,800	363,400	-600	-0.2%	10,800	3.0%

*Current month's estimates are preliminary.

From March 2021 to March 2022, the VEC estimates that establishments in Virginia gained 109,200 jobs, an increase of 2.8 percent. In March, the private sector recorded an over-the-year gain of 98,900 jobs, while employment in the public sector gained 10,300 jobs.

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Compared to a year ago, on a **seasonally adjusted** basis, nine of eleven major industry divisions experienced employment increases while two saw employment decrease. The largest over-the-year job gain occurred in **leisure and hospitality**, up 54,700 jobs (+16.1%). The next largest over-the-year job gains occurred in **professional and business services**, up 16,900 jobs (+2.2%) and **trade and transportation** (+13,000 jobs). **Government** also saw employment increase over-the-year, up 10,300 jobs (+1.5%). Within government, both local government (+10,800 jobs) and state government (+500 jobs) saw employment increase while federal government lost 1,000 jobs. Other job gains occurred in **education and health services** (+9,900 jobs), **miscellaneous services** (+6,500 jobs), **information** (+2,100 jobs), **construction** (+1,900 jobs), and **mining** (+300 jobs). The only two industries to record over-the-year job losses were **finance** (-3,600 jobs) and **manufacturing** (-2,800 jobs).

Total Nonfarm Employment in Virginia* Seasonally Adjusted

Area	Employment			February 2022 to March 2022		March 2021 to March 2022	
	March 2022	February 2022	March 2021	Change	% Change	Change	% Change
Virginia	4,020,900	4,018,200	3,911,700	2,700	0.1%	109,200	2.8%
Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford MSA	81,200	81,700	76,600	-500	-0.6%	4,600	6.0%
Charlottesville MSA	118,100	117,900	114,000	200	0.2%	4,100	3.6%
Harrisonburg MSA	69,800	70,100	67,000	-300	-0.4%	2,800	4.2%
Lynchburg MSA	103,900	103,400	101,200	500	0.5%	2,700	2.7%
Northern Virginia MSA	1,518,000	1,513,400	1,472,300	4,600	0.3%	45,700	3.1%
Richmond MSA	674,700	671,800	660,000	2,900	0.4%	14,700	2.2%
Roanoke MSA	158,600	159,200	156,800	-600	-0.4%	1,800	1.1%
Staunton-Waynesboro MSA	50,800	51,400	49,600	-600	-1.2%	1,200	2.4%
Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News, Virginia/North Carolina MSA	776,000	775,800	765,000	200	0.0%	11,000	1.4%
Winchester, Virginia/West Virginia MSA	68,900	69,100	66,200	-200	-0.3%	2,700	4.1%

*Current month's estimates are preliminary.

Seasonally adjusted total nonfarm employment data is produced for ten metropolitan areas. In March, five metropolitan areas experienced over-the-month job gains and five experienced job losses. The areas with the largest employment increases were Northern Virginia (+4,600 jobs) followed by Richmond (+2,900 jobs). Other over-the-month increases also occurred in Lynchburg (+500 jobs), Charlottesville (+200 jobs), and Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News (+200 jobs). The largest job loss over-the-month occurred in Roanoke and Staunton-Waynesboro, each losing 600 jobs. Other losses occurred in Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford (-500 jobs), Harrisonburg (-300 jobs), and Winchester (-200 jobs).

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Over-the-year, **seasonally adjusted** total nonfarm employment increased in all ten metropolitan areas. The Northern Virginia metropolitan area experienced the largest absolute job gain, up 45,700 jobs (+3.1%). Richmond and Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News followed with gains of 14,700 jobs (+2.2%) and 11,000 jobs (+1.4%) respectively. Other over-the-year job gains occurred in Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford (+4,600 jobs), Charlottesville (+4,100 jobs), Harrisonburg (+2,800 jobs), Lynchburg (+2,700 jobs), Winchester (+2,700 jobs), Roanoke (+1,800 jobs), and Staunton-Waynesboro (+1,200 jobs).

NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED DATA

Virginia's **unadjusted** unemployment rate decreased 0.2 percentage points in March to 2.7 percent. This is 1.8 percentage points lower than the rate from a year ago. Compared to a year ago, the number of unemployed decreased by 76,297, household employment increased by 144,227, and the labor force increased by 67,930. Virginia's not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate continues to be below the national unadjusted rate, which decreased by 0.3 percentage points in March to 3.8 percent.

Compared to last month, the March unadjusted workweek for Virginia's 152,300 manufacturing production workers decreased by 0.4 hours to 40.2 hours. Average hourly earnings of private-sector production workers increased by \$.12 to \$21.75 in March and average weekly earnings decreased by \$3.83 to \$874.35.

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Technical note: Estimates of unemployment and industry employment levels are obtained from two separate monthly surveys. Resident employment and unemployment data are mainly derived from the Virginia portion of the national Current Population Survey (CPS), a household survey conducted each month by the U.S. Census Bureau under contract with BLS, which provides input to the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program (often referred to as the "household" survey). Industry employment data is mainly derived from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) survey, a monthly survey of approximately 18,000 Virginia businesses conducted by BLS, which provides estimates of employment, hours, and earnings data broken down by industry for the nation as a whole, all states and most major metropolitan areas (often referred to as the "establishment" survey). Both industry and household estimates are revised each month based on additional information from updated survey reports compiled by the BLS. **For national figures and information on how COVID-19 affected collection of the BLS establishment and household surveys in April 2020, refer to the BLS [March 2022 Employment Situation](#) press release for details.**

The statistical reference week for the household survey this month was the week of March 6-12, 2022.

The Virginia Employment Commission plans to release the March local area unemployment rates on Wednesday, April 27, 2022. The data will be available on our website www.VirginiaWorks.com. The April 2022 statewide unemployment rate and employment data for both the state and metropolitan areas are scheduled to be released on Friday, May 20, 2022.